

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 /059 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3285

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1589

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, BU

SUBJECT: PECKING ORDER OF BULGARIAN LEADERSHIP

1. DURING ONE AND ONE-HALF HOUR FAREWELL VISIT ON SOVIET AMB BAZOVSKII, WHEN HE MENTIONED (IN CONNECTION WITH IMPROVED CONTACTS) THAT I HAD BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO CALL ON "THE FORMER NUMBER TWO MAN, BORIS VELCHEV," I HAD GOOD OPENING TO ASK WHO, IN HIS OPINION, CAN NOW BE CONSIDERED NUMBER TWO IN THE PECKING ORDER.

2. WITHOUT HESITATION HE SAID PRIME MINISTER STANKO TODOROV. HE ADDED THAT ALEKSANDUR LILOV HAS INHERITED THE FUNCTIONS OF VELCHEV IN THE POLITBURO, BUT LILOV "LACKS THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE" WHICH TODOROV HAS ACCUMULATED. HE THUS WOULD RANK LILOV NUMBER THREE. HE SAID, INCIDENTALLY, THAT LILOV'S HEALTH IS MUCH IMPROVED.

3. ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH WHO WOULD RANK NEXT IN ORDER ELICITED COMMENTS ABOUT "LACK OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE" ON THE PART OF VIRTUALLY ALL THE OTHERS WHO MIGHT BE NEXT IN LINE. BAZOVSKII EXPRESSED HIGH OPINION OF GRISHA FILIPOV, WHO HANDLES ECONOMIC MATTERS IN THE POLITBURO, AND OF OGNYAN DOYNOV, "WHO NOW HAS HIS FEET FIRMLY PLANTED ON THE GROUND, SO THAT IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO RELEASE CHAKUROV FOR A
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CABINET POSITION."

4. AS FOR ANDREI LUKANOV (VICE PREMIER), BAZOVSKIII SAID HE IS VERY GIFTED BUT IS "TOO YOUNG AND STILL NEEDS SEASONING." AS USUAL HE EXPRESSED HIGH OPINION OF FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV WITHOUT SITUATING HIM IN ANY PARTICULAR PLACE IN THE POWER STRUCTURE.

5. BAZOVSKII DID NOT MENTION LYUDMILLA ZHIVKOVA DURING
THAT PART OF OUR CONVERSATION.
HERZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Sent Date: 22-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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